THE Proviſo or Condition OF THE PROMISES,

The Strait, but the Straight-way that leadeth unto Happineſs.

Being the Subſtance of Two

SERMONS

Preached at *Wilton*, *March* the Firſt. 1656.

Upon 2 Cor. 7. 1.

Now publiſhed at the requeſt of ſome of the Pariſhioners and Auditors then preſent:

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THE Proviso or Condition OF THE PROMISES:

The Strait, but the Straight-way that leadeth unto Happiness.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Having therefore these promises, dearly Beloved, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting Holiness in the fear of God.

THat this Text is a Conclusion or Inference, out of the Apostles former Conference or Discourse, none that observe that Illative note ὖν, or *therefore*, will deny. And as the three last Verses of the former Chapter, are an Introduction to

this; ſo it is a Genuine Deduction therefrom, in which (the Illative Particle ſet apart) we have two general parts.

The firſt is a loving and a winning compellation in the word ἀγαπητοὶ, *Beloved*, or *Dearly Beloved.*

The other is an Apoſtolical Impoſition or Charge, *Having therefore theſe promiſes, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.*

To begin with the firſt of theſe; It is ſaid of *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 19. That the Lord *did let none of his words fall to the ground*; ſo will I not paſs over any one word in the Text untouched.

Dearly Beloved: This title the Apoſtle uſeth not complementally nor formally, but in reality and truth; for theſe *Corinthians* were intirely beloved of St. *Paul*, not with the common love onely, which we ow to all men, but with a ſpecial affection; and that upon a threefold accompt.

1. As they were born and begotten from above.

2. As

2. As they were his Spiritual Brethren, and Fellow-members in Chriſt. And

3. As they were his own Off-ſpring, and the Fruits of his labor in the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 4. 15. *For in Chriſt Jeſus I have begotten you through the Goſpel.*

Whence we have two Inſtructions.

1. That there are not onely Natural but Spiritual Relations to be found among men, eſpecially in the Church and Congregation of the Saints, 1 *Cor.* 4. 14. *I write not theſe things to ſhame you, but as my beloved ſons I warn you.*

2. That this Spiritual Conſanguinity, is or ſhould be as effectual to beget mutual and reciprocal affection, as the natural affinity is, yea, far more forcible. 1 *John* 3. 1. Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him that is begotten of him.

And here he ſaith, *Dearly Beloved*, but paſs we now from the Compellation to the Impoſition, wherein the Apoſtle doth evidence the truth of his love unto them in two things.

1. In minding them of the antecedent promiſes,

promiſes, ſet down in the cloſe of the foregoing Chapter, *Having therefore theſe promiſes.*

2. In exciting them to eye, obſerve, and fulfil the condition of the ſame, leſt they ſhould come ſhort of them in the end; *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.* Our Apoſtle, *Chap.*4.10. of his former Epiſtle, tells us, That according to the grace of God which was given unto him he as a wiſe Maſter-builder had laid the Foundation, and that another buildeth thereupon: But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. The former part of that Verſe he hath verified as elſwhere, ſo in this Text; the latter part which is the Caution, lieth upon my ſelf, and all other Miniſters in theſe days, to look unto it; namely, what, and how, we build upon this Foundation.

In this part of the Text then we have two ſubordinate Members; the Apoſtles groundwork, *Having therefore theſe promiſes*; and then his ſuperſtructure, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves*

ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit; or theſe two. A true ſuppoſition, *Having therefore theſe promiſes*; and then an advice, impoſition, and injunction, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves, &c.* Or in plain terms, the Apoſtle's Doctrine, and the uſe which he makes of it; the former being matter of Grace and Promiſe; the latter, matter of Command and Duty. Of which, the groundwork is firſt to be ſurveyed, τέτων δὲ ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας. This part of the Text we may call the Believers Patrimony, or rather his evidence for that which he hopeth for, and is to ſeek after, *Heb.* 11. 1. Faith is ſaid to be the ground or ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence or demonſtration of things not ſeen; which is eſpecially *ratione objecti*, in regard of the promiſes on which it is built. In this then are three particulars to be ſeriouſly viewed.

1. The intereſt of Believers, or of the yong itinerant Saints, πάσας τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, *theſe promiſes*. And

2. The perſons that have ſpecial intereſt in them, to wit, Converts and Believing Saints;

Saints; ſuch as theſe *Corinthians* were.

3. What intereſt theſe have therein for the preſent.

For the firſt of theſe, we may here take notice,

1. That the beſt intereſt that the yong Saints have for all manner of bleſſings, not yet enjoyed, are the rich, precious, and moſt infallible promiſes of God. *Heb.* 11, 13. Theſe all died in the Faith, not having received the promiſes; but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſwaded of them.

And 2. whereas the promiſes of God are of two ſorts, concerning either Corporal or Spiritual things, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. *But godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having a promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* We may note, that the Spiritual promiſes (ſuch as theſe are, to which St. *Paul* relates) are the greateſt promiſes, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that by them we ſhould or might be made partakers of the Divine Nature, having eſcaped the corruption that is in the world through luſt.*

3. Ob.

3. Obſerve, that among many Spiritual promiſes (thoſe to which our Apoſtle here refers us) are not the meaneſt or the leaſt, as is implied in the word ταύτας, which is here not onely a Relative, but a Demonſtrative Noune or Pronoune. Now then to take them in the order of nature; firſt, it carrieth us back to the promiſe of Reception. *Verſ.* 17. of the former Chapter, *And I will receive you*; Where the Apoſtle ſeemeth to look back to *Jere* 3.14. and other ſuch like places. Secondly, He tranſmits us to *Verſe* 16. where the Lord ſaith, *That he will be our God, and we ſhall be his people*; according to *Levit.* 26. 12. *Jere.* 31. 33. and many other places of that import: Thirdly, He leads us back to the 18 *Verſe*, where the Lord promiſeth to be our Father, and to take us for his Sons and Daughters, according to *Iſai.* 43.6. *Hoſ.* 1.10. This word ταύτας, or *theſe*, is alſo Signal or Demonſtrative, and ſets forth the tranſcendency of the phraſes in theſe particulars. Firſt, In the Author of them, who is ſaid to be Almighty, *Verſe* 18. and therefore able to perform; and in *Verſe* 17. he is ſtiled

Jehovah, or the Lord that changeth not. Secondly, In regard of the great things promiſed, or the contents of the promiſes, of which you heard before: Unto which, two great Dignities and Prerogatives more are to be added out of *Verſe* 16. That God hath promiſed to ſet his Sanctuary in us, and to make us his Temple, according to *Levit.* 26. 11. And ſecondly, to make us his Garden *Eden* or Paradiſe, in that he hath promiſed to walk in us: A third remarkable thing is, the extent of theſe promiſes, That they are made not onely to the Males, but the Females alſo; *Verſe* 18. and the laſt thing not to be paſſed over without due obſervation and regard, is the condition of the promiſes, upon which they were made: *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate, ſaith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you*; which is the ſum of *Pauls* injunction and charge here in our Text.

Thus of the Intereſt it ſelf, *theſe promiſes*; the perſons intereſted are, as you ſee, the *Corinthian* Saints, and all ſuch as were converted

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to God, believed in his Son, and were baptiſed and waſhed through him inwardly, as well as outwardly: For the promiſe is made to you and your children, and to all that are afar of, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call. For the third, the kinde, meaſure, or degree of Intereſt, which theſe perſons have; it is not for the moſt part actual poſſeſſion, and ſenſe or feeling grounded thereupon; but a true claim and title thereunto, and a ſuitable hope, ſo far as they do or intend to obſerve the conditions of the promiſes, *Rom.*8.24,25. 2 *Cor.*5.7. *Phil:*3.12. Not as though I had already attained, *Heb.*11.13. before alleadged.

Thus of the ground-work; now of the Apoſtles ſuperſtructure, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh,&c.* From which words we may in the general learn theſe three things.

Firſt, That the promiſes of God are not onely a foundation of our Faith, Hope, and Comfort; but are, or ſhould be, a ground-work of our obedience, and a moſt effectual incentive or motive unto duty, as *Epheſ.*6.2.

Honor thy Father and Mother, which is the firſt Commandment with promiſe.

Secondly, That in Gods promiſes, which are conditional (as all theſe are) we muſt not onely have an eye upon what is promiſed, but a ſharp regard alſo upon what is required. The condition as well as the donation of the promiſes muſt be heeded, regarded, and obſerved.

Thirdly, Whereas this charge here tends unto, and ends in the work of Sanctification, let us take notice, That the great exigence and requiring of the promiſes at our hands, is the carrying on, and finiſhing of the great, holy, and moſt neceſſary work of our Sanctification, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 4. For this is the Will of God, even your Sanctification. It is that whereunto we were elected, *Epheſ.* 1. 4. and called, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 7. But to come to a more particular conſideration of the condition, which is the main thing inſiſted upon in this Text; in it we have a twofold Chriſtian duty, and both of the greateſt importance, injoyned unto us, and charged upon us; the firſt in theſe words, *Let us cleanſe our ſelves from*

from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit: The ſecond in theſe, *Perfecting holineſs in the fear of God*. Of which, we ſhall crave leave to ſpeak in this order; Firſt, by way of Analyſis and Expoſition; Secondly, by way of Doctrine & Propoſition; and thirdly, by way of Tranſpoſition to our ſelves, or of Uſe and Application. All which ſhall be grounded upon clear and evident teſtimony of Scripture.

For the firſt of theſe injunctions or charges laid upon us; in it are four things to be opened, the firſt is the evil which is to be removed, *All filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit*; the ſecond is the perſons from whom it is to be ſeparated, *Our ſelves*; the third is by what kinde of act, *By cleanſing the ſame out*; and the fourth is the perſons that are to be engaged in this work, *Let us*.

The evil to be removed, is not the evil of puniſhment for ſin, but the evil of ſin, the root and ſpring of all our miſery; it is here called ὁ μολυσμὸς, inquinament or pollution; By which word we are not onely to underſtand the open ſin, but the falſe holineſs alſo; which is not preſcribed by the Lord, but choſen

choſen and ſet up by men: All which is not onely filthy in the concrete, but filthineſs in the Abſtract, *Iſai.* 64. 6. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteouſneſſes are as filthy rags; and we all do fade like a Leafe, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away* This filthineſs is here ſet forth by a diſtribution of it into its ſpecies, according to a twofold ſubject, *The filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit.* Where we may obſerve, Firſt, That there is not onely a pollution of the fleſh to be found; ſuch as lying, ſwearing, curſing, gluttony, drunkenneſs, fornication, whoredom, coveteouſneſs, theft, murder, and ſuch like groſs and manifeſt ſins are; but a filthineſs of the ſpirit alſo, whereby the Devils are denominated unclean ſpirits; ſuch as high-flying thoughts, ſerpentine wiſdom, hypocriſie, and ſeeming holineſs, pride, and arrogancy, ſelf-love, ſelf-ſeeking, ſtrife and debate, factiouſneſs, wrath, revenge, malice, cruelty, miſchievouſneſs, perſecution, and heart-murder, ſpiritual whoredom, and the like. Secondly, take notice from hence, That man conſiſting not onely of a body

which

which is fleſh, but of an immortal ſpirit, is ſince the fall, ſubject to ſins of both kindes (which the Devils themſelves are not) till by Grace they be wholly waſhed away. In this evil to be removed, we are alſo to attend the meaſure and degree, in which it is to be removed πᾶς ὁ μολυσμὸς all filthineſs; for as *Solomon* ſpeaketh, *Eccleſ.* 10. 1. *Dead flies cauſe the Apothecaries ointment to ſend forth a ſtinking ſavor; ſo doth a little folly, him that is in reputation for wiſdom and honor.* Thus of the evil to be removed; the perſons from whom we are to remove it, are not our Brethren onely, but our ſelves in the firſt place, *Matth.* 7. 5. *Thou hypocrite, firſt caſt out the beam that is in thine own eye, and then ſhalt thou ſee clearly to caſt out the mote that is in thy Brothers eye*; For *every one of us muſt give an account of himſelf unto God*, *Rom.* 14. 12. The act to be imployed in this removal of the evil, is the word καθαρίσωμεν, *Let us cleanſe or purifie our ſelves*; whereof the legal waſhings, purifications, and cleanſings were a type. So that a bare confeſſion of our ſins, a bewailment of them, a loathing of them, and a purpoſe

purpoſe to leave them; though theſe be good ſteps and degrees towards this act and duty, yet they all fall ſhort of what is here required, and propoſed of the true and induſtrious Saints, 1 *John* 3. 3. The fourth and laſt thing to be opened, is the perſons who are here to be engaged, and vigorouſly ſet on work; to wit, all that have any remainders of inward or outward filthineſs left in them, even they that in a good meaſure are purified already; ſuch as theſe Saints of *Corinth* were.

Thus far by way of Expoſition; now the Propoſition and Doctrine upon the whole, is this, That all they that would have an intereſt and ſhare in the precious promiſes aforeſaid, muſt *Cleanſe themſelves of all filthineſs, both of the fleſh and of the ſpirit.* This Doctrine is not mine, but the Apoſtle *Paul's* expreſly here and elſwhere, as you will ſee anone; and not his onely, but the Doctrine of the Prophets, of the Apoſtles, and of Chriſt himſelf; witneſs theſe enſuing Scriptures, *Iſai.* 1. 16. *Waſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, ceaſe*

ceaſe to do evil. Iſa. 57 11. *Depart ye, depart ye; go ye from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midſt of her, be ye clean ye that bear the Veſſels of the Lord.* Jere 4. 14. *Waſh thine heart, O* Jeruſalem, *that thou maiſt be ſaved: How long ſhall thy wicked thoughts lodg in thee?* Jere. 13. 27. *Wo unto thee, O* Jeruſalem, *wilt not thou be made clean? O when ſhall it once be?* Ezek. 18. 31. *Caſt away all your tranſgreſſions whereby you have tranſgreſſed, and make you a new heart, and a new ſpirit; for why will ye die, O houſe of* Iſrael? 1 Pet. 2. 1. *Wherefore lay aſide all malice (or naughtineſs) and all guile and hypocriſies, and evil ſurmiſings, and all evil ſpeakings.* Jam. 1. 21. *Wherefore laying aſide all filthineſs, and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, receive with meekneſs the ingrafted word which is able to ſave your ſouls.* Jam. 3. 6. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you; cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts ye double-minded.* Matth. 5. 6. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart, for they* (and they onely) *ſhall ſee God.*

Nor is there leſs ground both of Reaſon & Equity, then Evidence of Scripture, for this

duty; Firſt, in regard of the miſchievouſneſs of that which is to be removed; Secondly, in regard of him that requireth it; and thirdly, in reſpect of the ſufficiency of help afforded unto us by the Lord, for that purpoſe; and laſtly, that we of right ſhould have a concurrent hand therein.

For the firſt of theſe; firſt conſider what all ſin and unrighteouſneſs is in Gods ſight; it is pollution and filthineſs it ſelf. *Ezek* 24. 13. Hence it is compared to every filthy and abominable thing, as to the gorge and vomit of drunkards. *Iſai.* 28,8. To the ſcum of a Pot. *Ezek.* 24 6,12. To the mire wherein the Sow walloweth. 2 *Pet.* 2. 22. To the vomit of a dog, there. To the whoredoms of a Strumpet. *Jere.* 13.27. *Ezek.* 22. To the abomination of Idols. *Ezek* 36.25.

Secondly, It is a ſuperfluous thing that men may well ſpare. *Jam.* 1. 21. *Wherefore put away all filthineſs and ſuperfluity of naughtineſs.*

Thirdly, It is of an infectious, contagious and ſpreading nature. 1 *Cor.* 5 6, 7. *Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

Fourthly,

Fourthly, It excludes us from entring into the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, *Rev* 21.27. *And there ſhall in no wiſe enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh abomination.*

Fifthly, There is no forgiveneſs of ſin until they be left and put away from us, whatſoever men may dream to the contrary. *Iſai.*1 16,17,18. *Waſh you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well; ſeek judgment, relieve the oppreſſed, judg the Fatherleſs, plead for the Widow. Come now and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord: Though your ſins be as ſcarlet, they ſhall be white as Snow; though they be red as crimſon, they ſhall be white as wool.* Jere. 33. 8. *And I will cleanſe them from all their iniquity, whereby they have ſinned againſt me: And I will pardon all their iniquity, whereby they have ſinned, and whereby they have tranſgreſſed againſt me*; for the cauſe muſt be taken away ere the effect can ceaſe. See *Prov.* 26 13.

Sixthly, That even the Law as well as the Goſpel, declares the wrath of God againſt

all ſin whatſoever. *Rom.* 1. 18. *For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men who withhold the truth in unrighteouſneſs.*

Now in the ſecond place, he that requireth this total removal of ſin, is of a contrary nature unto it, and cannot poſſibly have any communion with it. *Pſal.* 94. 20. *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowſhip with thee?* 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. [For what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs, and what communion hath light with darkneſs; and what concord hath Chriſt with *Belial?*] *Hab.* 1. 13. [Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil, and canſt not look on iniquity.]

In the third place, the Lord doth not onely afford us ſpace and time to get this work done, *Rev.* 2. 21. [And I gave her ſpace to repent, and ſhe repented not,] but ſufficient means alſo for our thorough cleanſing ſo. *Ezek.* 36. 25. [Then will I ſprinkle clean water upon you, and you ſhall be clean from all your filthineſs; and from all your idols will I cleanſe you:] Which promiſed water

is

is not onely the pure water, and doctrine of his Word. *John* 15. 3. [Now are ye clean through the Word which I have ſpoken unto you.] *Epheſ.* 5. 26. [That he might ſanctifie and waſh it with water through the Word;] but the promiſed Spirit of Chriſt alſo, which ſometimes is called the Blood of the Covenant, becauſe it was figured forth by Blood in the Old Teſtament, *Exod.* 24. 6, 7, 8. & 29. 20. *Levit.* 8. 23, 24. & 14. 14. Sometimes it is compared to fire. *Iſai.* 4. 4. [When the Lord ſhall have waſhed the filth of the Daughter of *Sion*, and purged away the blood of *Jeruſalem* by the ſpirit of judgment, and the ſpirit of burning:] And ſometimes to water, as *Iſai.* 44. 3. [I will pour water upon him that is thirſty, and a flood upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my bleſſing upon thine Off-ſpring:] And ſometimes to Fullers Sope. *Mal.* 3. 2. [For he is like the Refiners fire, and Fullers ſope:] This is expreſly ſpoken of Chriſt; ſo that we neither want water nor ſope, to make a thorow cleanſing or purgation of our ſelves from ſins.

For

For this is the Fountain which the Lord hath opened to the houſe of *David* and the inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, for ſin and for uncleanneſs. *Zech.*13. 1.

In the fourth place, it is but meet that we which had a hand in polluting and defiling our ſelves, ſhould be imployed and engaged in the purging our ſelves; and ſo much the rather, becauſe it is for our own good and everlaſting welfare.

Thus of the words by way of Propoſition: Now by way of Tranſpoſition and Uſe, the Truth and Equity of this Doctrine being thus cleared up, what remains but that we ſhould make our beſt advantage of it? For whatſoever things were written aforetime, they were written for our inſtruction.

1. Then by way of Information, it is conſequent from hence, That as nothing is ſo offenſive and contrary to God, and his Divine Nature, as ſin is; ſo there is no greater bar and obſtruction, then iniquity and unrighteouſneſs is, to keep us from the benefit of all his promiſes, 1 *Sam.*2.30. *Iſa.*59.22.

2. That in this point ſome of our Modern

dern writers in *Europe*, are much degenerated from the Doctrine of the Prophets and Apoſtles.

3. That what *Paul* ſpeaketh, *Rom.*7. 14, 15,16. is to be underſtood onely of Babes in Chriſt. Secondly, this Doctrine ſerves to confute many common errors and miſtakes; and firſt, that opinion or aſſertion, That ſin cannot be wholly ſubdued in the Saints, by the Grace and Truth of Chriſt, while they live in the Mortal Body; for if that cannot be attained, the deſign of the Father, who gave his Son, that he might deſtroy the workmanſhip of the Devil, 1 *John* 3. 8. is diſappointed, and Chriſts love towards men is made of none effect; who loved us and gave himſelf for us, that he might ſanctifie and waſh us with the waſhing of water by the Word, and preſent us unto himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrincle, or any ſuch thing. *Epheſ.*5. 24,25,26,27. Yea, the condition of the promiſes being impoſſible to be performed, ſhould be unjuſt, and the promiſes made of none effect; but whereas many places in the Old Teſtament are brought

brought to plead for the continuance in ſin, as 1 *King.*8, 46. *Prov.*20.9. *Eccle.*7.20. To thoſe we may anſwer with the words of the Apoſtle, *Heb.*7.19. That the Law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God. And for the Scriptures alleadged out of the New Teſtament, that of *Rom.*7.24,25. cannot be underſtood of *Pauls* preſent eſtate; for the ſecond Verſe of Chapter eight, contradict it, as doth alſo 1 *Cor.*4.4. 2 *Cor.*5.16, 17. *Phil* 4.13. but muſt onely be underſtood as was ſaid before, of the Babes and Yonglings in Chriſt; ſo muſt that alſo be underſtood, *Gal.*5.17. and that 1 *John* 1.8. as is evident, if it be compared with Verſe the thirteenth, and fourteenth of the ſecond Chapter; or with Verſe third of the third Chapter; and with Verſe the ſeventeenth of the fourth Chapter; laſtly, That of *Jam.*3.2. can in reaſon be no more underſtood of him, and his Fellow-Apoſtles, where he ſaith, That in many things we offend all, then that which he ſpeaks plurally alſo Verſe 9. Therewith bleſs we God, even the Father, (to wit, with the

the tongue) and therewith curſe we men which are made after the ſimilitude of God.

Secondly, This giveth a check to their Error, who ſay, That in death (when we put off the Body of Clay) all ſin ſhall be put off and mortified, and not before: For firſt it is by the Spirit, that the deeds of the body or fleſh muſt be mortified, and not the ſinful deeds of the ſpirit by the fleſh, *Rom.* 8. 13. Secondly, If the natural death healed all ſins, none would die in their ſins, as our Saviour threatens, that the unbelieving Jews ſhould do, *John* 8. 21, 24. Laſtly, We are commanded to cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh, and of the ſpirit; and this is to be done in our life time, and not to be done in our days of our death: And by this opinion, Corporal death ſhould effect more, then the Spirit of Grace could do all our life long, in the final mortification of our ſins.

Thirdly, This may confute them, who affirm, That Chriſt came to take away the guilt of our ſins by his death, and ſuffering be-

fore the act or corruption is taken away; for the cauſe muſt be taken away before the effect, as we ſaid before and proved out of *Iſai.* 1. 16, 17, 18. *Jere.* 33. 8. to which you may adde, Chap. 31, 32, 33, 34. *Acts* 26. 18. *Heb.* 10. 14. For through the Blood of his Croſs, in due time he taketh away the guilt of ſins repented of, left, and put away; yet the Spirit of Grace, which is the Blood of the Everlaſting Covenant, muſt firſt ſanctifie us, and cleanſe us therefrom, *Heb.* 9. 14. alſo *Chap.* 10. 29. & 13. 20, 21. *Revel.* 7. 14.

Fourthly, This may ſtop the mouths of them which ſay, we do not read, That ever any man yet was cleanſed wholly from ſin; to which we Reply, That if this were not, men themſelves, and not the Grace of God, were in default; but there is an *Iſrael*, who are of a clean heart, *Pſal* 73. 1. Who are crucified to the world, and the world to them, *Gal.* 6. 14, 15, 16. In whoſe Spirit there is no guile, and conſequently no ſin, for all ſin is deceitful; ſo *Pſal.* 32. 2. *Epheſ.* 4. 22. Yea, *John* ſaw a numberleſs number of thoſe, *Rev.* 7. 9, 10, 14. So alſo *Revel.* 14. 4. Theſe are the

the *Iſrael*, of which we read *Num.* 23.21. and *Zeph.* 3.14,15.

Laſtly, It meets with that diſtinction more common then commendable; that though ſin muſt not reign in us, yet it muſt remain in us while we are here: For firſt, as long as it remains in us, it will oppoſe the work of God, and get the victory at times, if not with our will, yet againſt our will. Secondly, If all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit muſt be purged out of us, how can it remain? do the ſpots or filth remain in clothes, when they are cleanſed there from? did not Chriſt come to ſanctifie and waſh us, that he might preſent us without ſpot or wrincle, or any ſuch thing unto himſelf? Surely this and other diſtinctions, that plead for the neceſſary continuance of ſin in us, cannot come from above; but ſince they hinder the work of the Lord, muſt needs originally come from Hell, and the Devil; though ſome perſons otherwiſe zealous and vertuouſly minded, have at unawares, received and uſed the ſame, without conſidering the hurt and miſchief that followeth thereupon. See *Jere.*

50. 20. *In thoſe days, and in that time, ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of* Iſrael *ſhall be ſought for, and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of* Judah, *and they ſhall not be found; for I will ſpare them which are left. Mic.* 7. 19. Sheweth how God will deal with the ſins and iniquities of his people, as he did with the *Egyptians*; he will firſt ſubdue, and then drown them: Alſo *Zeph.* 3. 13. he promiſes, That the remnant of *Iſrael* ſhall not utter iniquity, nor ſpeak lies: And *Mal.* 3. 3. That Chriſt *ſhall ſit as a refiner and a purifier of ſilver, and he ſhall purifie the ſons of* Levi, *and purge them as gold and ſilver, that they may offer unto him an offering in righteouſneſs.*

But thus much of the Uſe of Confutation; now by way of Correction.

This Propoſition or Doctrine ſerves to reprove four ſorts of men among others: Firſt, Thoſe who have cleanſed themſelves from many outward ſins of the fleſh, but are not purified from the ſins of the ſpirit; as ſpiritual pride, wrath, uncharitable cenſuring, envy, and the like. *Prov.* 30. 12. *There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes, and*

yet

yet are not waſhed from their filthineſs: So *Matth* 23. 25, 26. *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, Hypocrites; for ye make clean the outſide of the cup, and of the platter, but within, they are full of extortion and exceſs.*

Secondly, It reprehends thoſe yet more ſecretly who rely upon the promiſe of God, and look to have their ſhare therein, and yet wittingly and willingly continue in the filthineſs both of fleſh and ſpirit: See *Jere.* 7. 8, 9, 13, alſo 27. To theſe it may be ſaid, as *Peter* ſpake to *Simon Magus*, *Acts* 8. 21, 22. *Thou haſt neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the ſight of the Lord.*

This yet more condemns their folly; who knowing that they muſt repent, and be cleanſed, ere they can be ſaved; yet not onely protract the time for ſo great a work, but daily pollute and defile themſelves, contracting more filthineſs then that which they had before, and making their ſtains and ſpots of a deeper dye, and harder to be waſhed out.

Finally, This may ſerve for the horror or terror of thoſe who having for a time begun to reform themſelves, and put away their ſins,

ſins, yet return again with the Dog to the vomit, and with the Sow to her wallowing in the mire; ſee 2 *Pet.* 1. 18, 19, 20. *Ezek.* 24. 13. *In thy filthineſs is lewdneſs, becauſe I have purged thee, and thou waſt not purged, thou ſhalt not be purged from thy filthineſs any more, until I have cauſed my fury to reſt upon thee.*

The fourth Uſe of this Doctrine, is for Exhortation: First, To all ſeriouſly to conſider this firſt condition of the promiſes, ſo clearly ſet down, Verſe 17. of the former Chapter, and here in the Text, and what is required thereby.

Secondly, To examine how far we have proceeded in fulfilling the ſame. *Prov.* 20. 9. *Who can ſay, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my ſins?* I fear very few.

Thirdly, To thoſe that have begun the work, that they go on forward to finiſh it. *Rev.* 22. 11. *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy ſtill; but he that is righteous, let him be righteous ſtill*; that is more and more. 1 *John* 3. 2, 3. *Beloved, now are we the children of God,*

yet

yet it doth not appear what we ſhall be; but we know, That when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him; for we ſhall ſee him as he is: For every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himſelf as he is pure.

Laſtly, To thoſe that have not begun this great important and moſt neceſſary work, to fall upon it forthwith: *O waſh you, make you clean,* ſaith *Iſai.* 1.16,17,18. otherwiſe you cannot have your ſins forgiven you; yea, *Waſh your hearts, that ye may be ſaved,* Jere. 4.14. *Cleanſe your hands ye ſinners, and purifie your hearts, ye double minded; be afflicted and mourn, and weep; for your laughter ſhall be turned into mourning, and your joy into heavineſs: Humble your ſelves in the ſight of God, and he ſhall lift you up, Jam* 4.8,9,10. Ye ſay that ye relie upon Chriſt, but what part hath Chriſt with *Belial?* 2 *Cor.* 6,15. Therefore *let every one that nameth the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, depart from iniquity,* 2 *Tim.* 2.19. See what the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith, *Pſal.* 24.3,4,5. *Who ſhall aſcend into the Hill of the Lord? And who ſhall ſtand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lift up his*

his ſoul to vanity, nor ſworn deceitfully: He (and he onely) *ſhall receive the bleſſing from the Lord, even righteouſneſs from the God of his ſalvation.* Therefore mortifie your members upon earth, fornication, uncleanneſs, inordinate, affection, evil-concupiſcence and covetouſneſs, which is idolatry; for which things ſake, the wrath of God cometh upon the children of diſobedience; ſee *Gal.* 5. 19, 20, 21. *Eph.* 4. 21.

Take to you the Water, the Water of the Word, *Pſal.* 119. 9. *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way, by taking heed thereunto, according to thy Word.* Seek Sope of Chriſt, yea, Fullers ſope, to be baptiſed with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire, *Mal* 3. 2. *Walk in the Light, as Chriſt is in the Light, and the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt ſhall purge you from all ſin,* 1 *Joh.* 1. 7. Let us follow the practice of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chro.* 29. who cauſed all the filth of the Temple to be carried out, and that houſe to be purged and ſanctified, that the holy Service of God might be renewed therein.

Thus

Thus of the firſt duty or Chriſtian courſe, required in the Condition or Proviſo of the Promiſes; now follows the other in theſe words, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ, *Perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.* In which, by way of Analyſis, we have two parts; firſt, a work of renovation or perfection, perfecting holineſs: The ſecond is the kinde of holineſs, the poſture or principle, in which and out of which it muſt be done, ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ, *in the fear of God.* For the former of theſe, in it are theſe particulars to be explained, ere we come to the Doctrine or Propoſition it ſelf.

Firſt, The object or ſubject thing to be perfected, *holineſs.*

The ſecond is the act required at our hands, in relation thereunto, *perfecting.*

Thirdly, The perſons to be engaged in that act likewiſe, *let us:*

For the firſt of theſe, It is not here the Sanctification of fleſh and blood, which is proud of its ſelf, and contemptuous of others. *Iſai.*65. 5. *Which ſay, Stand by thy*

ſelf, *come not near me, for I am holier then thou.* Which how ſpecious ſoever it may ſeem, it is but hypocriſie before the Lord, and an abomination in his ſight, *Prov.* 14. 12. alſo 16. 25. *Luke* 16. 15. For that which is eſteemed highly among men, is an abomination before the Lord; for this holineſs may be changed for a better, but cannot any way be perfected: Nor is this holineſs a ceremonial holineſs, which was but a figure of the true; but in ſhort, it is that which is called Gods own holineſs, *Iſai.* 65. 18. *Heb.* 12. 10. Not onely becauſe he commands it, but it is that way wherein he walketh, the holineſs which he communicateth, and whereby the Saints are denominated holy ones; of which *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh, *Chap.* 35. 8. *And an high-way ſhall be there, and a way, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs; the unclean ſhall not paſs over it, but it ſhall be for thoſe; the wayfaring-men, though fools, ſhall not erre therein.* This is that holineſs that becomes the Houſe of God for ever, *Pſal.* 93. 5. Which holineſs is either a way and race, to wit, an holy courſe of obedience in fulfilling

filling the Will of God, *Rom.*6. 22. ***But now ye have your fruits unto holineſs, and the end everlaſting life.*** *Heb.* 10. 36. Or elſe it is the inward holineſs of Gods Image and Kingdom, from whence that obedience proceedeth. *Eph.*4. 24. ***And that ye put on the new man, which is created after God in righteouſneſs and holineſs of truth.*** Both which, if they be not coincident, yet concur to one effect, the purging out of all iniquity. So that this laſt duty ſeems to be required in order to the former, and both in reſpect of the promiſes.

For the ſecond particular, the act here required ἐπιτελέω, ſignifies not onely to go about a thing, *Luke* 13. 32. and to execute it, 2 *Cor.* 8. 6, 11. but to finiſh and to adde the end to the beginning. *Phil.* 1. 6. And ſo here the Participle here uſed, ſignifieth a profection with a tendency to a perfection. As for the word ***perfection***, it is variouſly uſed, and there is a manifold perfection ſpoken of among men; one of profeſſion and outward ſtate among the Papiſts; and ſo they will have their religious men, eſpecially

thoſe in orders, to be termed perfect men, if any will indulge them that honor and dignity; and another of the inward ſtate, which we are here to underſtand; that again is manifold; one of ſincerity and uprightneſs: So King *Hezekiah* pleads for himſelf, That he had walked before the Lord in truth, and with a perfect heart, *Iſai.* 38.3: But this perfection is not ſufficient, or always to be reſted in. 1 *Pet.* 1. 22. *Seeing ye have purified your ſouls in obeying the truth, through the ſpirit, unto unfeigned or ſincere love of the Brethren: See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.* See 1 *Theſ.* 3.12.

A ſecond perfection there is of parts, when all the ſeveral graces of Gods ſanctifying ſpirit are found in a man. This is conceived to be in every Convert or Believer. But the truth thereof may be juſtly queſtioned; for ſome want humility, ſome meekneſs, ſome patience, and the like: And why doth St. *Peter* command us to adde to our Faith, Vertue; to Vertue, Knowledge; to Knowledge, Temperance; to Temperance, Patience; to Patience, Godlineſs; to Godlineſs, Brotherly

ly kindneſs; to Brotherly kindneſs, Love. If we have all theſe at our firſt converſion? 2 *Pet.* 1. 5,6,7.

A third is the perfection of degrees, when holineſs in a full degree is by us attained anſwerable to the Law of God: And this is threefold, according to a threefold eſtate or diſpenſation. The firſt is of love to God above all, and to our Neighbor as to our ſelves, which is the ſum and fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets; to the putting down of all contrary diſpoſitions: This is a perfection enjoyned by the Apoſtle, *Col* 3. 14. *And above all put on Love, which is the Bond of perfection.* 1 *Pet.* 4. 8. This is called *perfectio viæ*, and allowed of by all the Schoolmen. The ſecond is a greater perfection and power in all love and goodneſs, when Chriſt in the power of his Reſurrection, ariſeth in the Saints, after they are wholly dead with him to ſin. *Rom.* 6. 5. For if we have been planted into Chriſt, with the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall alſo in the likeneſs of his Reſurrection. This is that which *Paul* ſaith he had not attained unto, when he wrote to the *Philippians*,

Philippians], Chap. 3. 11, 12. And yet even then he was able to do all things, *viz.* that were commanded through Chriſt which ſtrengthens him, Chap. 4. 12, 13. Howbeit he hoped for the other, even while he was *viator*, or in the body.

The third is *perfectio patriæ*, the higheſt perfection of the Saints, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaketh, *Heb.* 12. 23. *And to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* Here in the Text, we underſtand the firſt of theſe three laſt named, which is an imperfect eſtate gradually in compariſon of the ſecond, as the ſecond is being parallel'd with the third; yet ſome there be who in this Text underſtand the ſecond alſo; which without doubt we ſhould both hope for, and pray for, preparing our ſelves thereunto. By the firſt perfection, and by both the former, we ſhould ſeek after the third; in all which, the righteouſneſs of the Law is fulfilled through Chriſt, but according to ſeveral diſpenſations and degrees: For in the firſt, we have communion with Chriſt, according to the fleſh, or in a lower and weaker way: In the

ſecond

ſecond with Chriſt according to the Spirit, in a more lively and powerful way in the ſimilitude of his Reſurrection, wherein he walked with his Diſciples forty days upon Earth: And in the third, with Chriſt after his Aſcenſion and Glorification; yet the leaſt of theſe is an holy Perfection.

For the perſons to be engaged, they are all thoſe that have not yet attained to that ſtate; for he that made us without our ſelves, will not ſave us without our beſt endeavors and concurrences; we have alſo had a hand in fulfilling the meaſure of our diſobedience and depravation; and the Lord may juſtly engage us in the work of new obedience, and the renewing of his Image and Kingdom in us; as he doth here and elſwhere frequently.

The whole Propoſition or Doctrine then is this, That thoſe who would be made heirs and partakers of the Divine Promiſes, muſt perfect the race of holy Obedience ſet before them, and the holy Image of God, which is to be renewed in them, or they muſt put on that love which is the Bond of perfection,

tection, and the fulfilling of the Law, as hath been ſaid: Nor is our Apoſtle herein ſingular and preciſe above other his Fellow-miniſters, the Meſſengers of God; nor goeth he higher then Chriſt himſelf did in his expreſs Commands: For as *Moſes* witneſſeth, the Lord required this of *Abraham*, the Father of the Believers, *Gen.* 17. 1. *And when* Abraham *was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared unto* Abraham, *and ſaid unto him, I am the Almighty God, walk thou before me, and be perfect.* And *Deut.* 10. 12. *Moſes* himſelf requireth as much of all *Iſrael*. *And now, O* Iſrael, *what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to ſerve the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, and with all thy ſoul?* And *Levit* 19. 18. *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbor as thy ſelf; I am the Lord.* And *Deut.* 18. 13. *Thou ſhalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.* So our Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* 13. 9. *And this we wiſh, even your perfection.* Yea, he injoyneth perfection unto them in his farewel, Verſe 11. *Finally, Brethren farewel: Be perfect, be of good comfort, be*

be of one minde, live in peace, and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you: So *Heb.* 6. 1. *Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Chriſt, let us go on to perfection.* Jam. 1 4. *But let patience have her perfect work in you, that ye may be perfect and intire, wanting nothing.* Chap. 2. 8. *If ye ſhall fulfil the Royal Law, according to the Scripture, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbor as thy ſelf, you do well.* Yea, Chriſt himſelf doth not onely commend love to God and men, unto us as the fulfilling of the Law and the Prophets, *Matth.* 22. 36, 37, 38, 39. but he expreſly commands us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect, *Matth.* 5. 48.

Nor is there leſs reaſon or equity for this part of the Charge and Condition, then there was for the former; For firſt, God who is holy, and love it ſelf, and perfect in holineſs and love, hath predeſtinated us to be made conformable unto the Image of his Son, *Rom.* 8. 29. *Who is the brightneſs of his glory, and the expreſs Image of his perſon, Heb.* 1. 3. And the genuine Son of the Father, in Truth and Love, 2 *Epiſt. John* 3.

Secondly, *He hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy and without blame before him in love*, Eph. 1. 4.

Thirdly, This holineſs in love, is that whereunto we are called; 1 *Theſ.* 4. 7. *For God hath not called us unto uncleanneſs, but unto holineſs*, Col. 3. 14. 1 *Pet.* 4. 8.

Fourthly, Holy love to God and men, is that which we ow to him for his love unto us in Chriſt, *Pſal.* 31. 23. & 116. 1. *I love the Lord, &c.* 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judg, that if one died for all, then were all dead, 1 *John* 3. to 16.

Fifthly, It is through holineſs and love, that all ſin muſt be overcome and buried in us. *Rom.* 12. 21. *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.* 1 Pet. 4. 8. *And above all things, have fervent love among your ſelves; for love ſhall cover the multitude of ſins*; yea, all ſins whatſoever, as *Solomon* teſtifieth in theſe words, *Prov.* 10. 12. *Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrife, but love covereth all ſin*; and that in a burying way firſt, or in mortification.

Sixth-

Sixthly, The Law of God (whoſe fulfiling and accompliſhment ſtandeth in love) is eſtabliſhed in Heaven for ever, *Pſal.* 78. 5, 6, 7, 8. & 119. 89. inſomuch, *That Heaven and Earth ſhall ſooner paſs away, then one jot or tittle of the Law ſhall go unfulfilled, Matth.* 5. 18. Which fulfilling muſt be accompliſhed, not onely by Chriſt for us, but by him and us joyntly. Alſo *Matth.* 3. 15. For he ſaith unto *John, Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteouſneſs.*

Seventhly, There is no other way left unto us in Chriſt, that leadeth to life, but the keeping of the Commandments through his grace and help. *Matth.* 7. 21. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.* Matth. 19, 17. *But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.* Rev. 22. 14. *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and enter through the Gates into the City.*

Eightly, God hath not left us deſtitute, either of outward or inward means, for the

fulfilling and accompliſhment of the Law; and the love, holineſs and righteouſneſs which it requireth: For firſt, as to outward means, the Apoſtle ſpeaks thus. 2 *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for redargution, for correction, and for inſtruction in righteouſneſs; That the man of God may be perfected and throughly furniſhed unto all good works.* *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. [And he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors, and Teachers; for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, and for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt: Till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature of the fulneſs of Chriſt.] And for inward means, [Chriſt is the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs ſake, to every one that believeth, *Rom.* 10. 4.] And that as otherwiſe, ſo that through his Grace and Spirit [the Righteouſneſs of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit, *Rom.* 8, 4.]

Ninthly,

Ninthly, God hath not onely promiſed to put his Law into our inward parts, and to write it in our hearts, *Jere.* 31. 33, 34. *Ezek.* 36. 25, 26, 27. but hath expreſly engaged himſelf to work ſo much love in us, as the Law any where requireth. *Deut.* 30. 6. [And the Lord thy God ſhall circumcife thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, that thou maiſt live.]

Tenthly, God is willing and ready to perfect his work unto the end, *Phil.* 1. 6, 7.

Eleventhly, Chriſt hath not onely taught us to pray for a perfect obedience to Gods will in this Petition, *Thy will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*; but he himſelf (who in all things was heard of his Father) hath prayed for our perfection in love. *John* 17. 20, 21, 22, 23. [Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo that ſhall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us: That the world may believe, that thou haſt ſent me; and the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given

given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou haſt ſent me, and haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me.]

Laſtly, The work which God hath given us to do, muſt be perfected and finiſhed in this life. See *Eccleſ.* 9. 10. *Tit.* 2. 12. That *we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly, in this preſent world; looking for the bleſſed Hope, &c.*

Much more might be alleadged upon this accompt: *Sed, Vivitur exiguo ſi quis bene noverit uti.*

Come we then to the Tranſpoſition and Application of this Propoſition; where firſt by way of Information, we may learn theſe Conſequents.

1. That as the Spiritual Promiſes aforeſaid, are precious and ſweet-conditioned Covenants, ſo they are to fleſh and blood, without aſſiſting Grace, difficult and hard-conditioned Promiſes. But our bleſſed Saviour told us aforehand, *Matth.* 7. 14. *That ſtrait*

ſtrait is the way, and narrow is the Gate, which leadeth unto life, and that there be few that enter in thereat; as did alſo his Apoſtle *Peter*, who ſaith, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. That the righteous ſhall ſcarcely (that is, with much difficulty) be ſaved; where then ſhall the ungodly and ſinner appear?

2. We may obſerve what need we have of a Saviour, that ſhould be God as well as Man; and that as in other regards, ſo to redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie or renew us unto himſelf, a peculiar people, zealous of good works, *Tit.* 2. 14. See alſo the end for which he gave himſelf, not onely to ſanctifie and waſh us with water through the Word; but alſo, that he might preſent us to himſelf a glorious Church, not having ſpot or wrincle, but that we ſhould be holy and without blemiſh, *Eph.* 5. 27. Hence it is that *Moſes* ſpeaks thus, *Deut.* 33. 29 *Happy art thou, O Iſrael; who is like unto thee, O people! ſaved by the Lord, the ſheild of thine help; and who is the ſword of thine excellency.*

Secondly, By way of Redargution, this firſt ſerves to controul their miſtake, who conceive

conceive that it is ſufficient unto Salvation, for us to be holy and religious with any kinde or in any degree of holineſs; For *Paul* ſpeaks thus, *Gal.* 3.3. [Are ye ſo fooliſh? having begun in the ſpirit, are ye made perfect in the fleſh?] *Heb.* 12.10. He ſaith, That the Lord chaſtneth us to make us partakers of his own holineſs; and the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 1.16. commanding us to be holy, as the Lord is holy, doth preſcribe both the true kinde and right degree of holineſs, for which we ſhould labor; at which alſo the Apoſtle aims when he prayeth thus, 1 *Theſ.* 3.12, 13. [And the Lord make you to increaſe and abound in love one towards another, and towards all men, even as we do towards you; to the end he may eſtabliſh your hearts unblameable in holineſs before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt with all his Saints.] Yea, the eternal life it ſelf, to which we are choſen in Chriſt Jeſus, is principally the perfection of holy love, as we heard before out of *Epheſ.* 1.4. Which thing alſo *David* affirms, *Pſal.* 133.3. For there he commanded the

bleſſing,

blessing, and life for evermore. Secondly, If any *Athenians* in our days, should ask as those did in former times, *Acts* 17. 19. [May we know what this new Doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?] St *John* the Beloved Disciple will give them satisfaction therein, 1 *Joh.* 2. 7, 8. [Brethren, I write no new Commandment unto you, but an old Commandment which ye had from the beginning; the old Commandment is the Word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new Commandment I write unto you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is past and the true light now shineth,] 2 *Joh.* Vers. 5, 6. [Now I beseech thee Lady, not as though I wrote a new Commandment unto thee; but that which we had from the beginning, namely, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his Commandments: This is the Commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.] Thirdly, It serves to answer many Cavils and Objections made by scrupulous men.

As first, Is not this Popery, because the

Papists hold Perfection? *Answer.* Though the Papists want no Errors, yet they hold there is one God, a Trinity of Persons, Two Natures in Christ's own Person, his Threefold Office, his Twofold Estate of Humiliation and Exaltation, and many more Orthodox and Primitive Heads of Doctrine: But nothing ought to be called or accounted Popish, which was taught by the Prophets, the Apostles, and Christ himself, as this Doctrine was both clearly and frequently held forth by all of them.

But is it not *Pelagian* Doctrine? Indeed *Pelagius* taught, That man could of himself fulfil the Law of God, to whom *Augustine* answereth, Let him adde these words, That he can do it by the Grace of God, and we consent.

But is it not *Arminianism?* No; for *Arminius* held the contrary, and herein are they *Arminians* who are otherwise minded.

Fourthly, It serves to check and overthrow their Error, who affirm the Law of God to be impossible to be fulfilled by the Saints in this life, though assisted by the Grace and Spirit

Spirit of Christ; who also do usually for that end affix and attribute such a rigor to the Law, as the Lord hath no where ascribed unto it. For not onely the Apostles, but Christ himself doth affirm, That the whole requiring of the Law, yea, and of the Prophets also, is fulfilled in the love aforesaid, see *Matth.* 22. 38, 39. *Rom.* 13. 8, 9. [Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou not covet; and if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, Thou shalt love thy Neighbor as thy self: Therefore love is the fulfilling of the Law.] See *Gal.* 5. 13, 14. Nor let any Reply that here the Apostle speaks onely of the Commandments of the second Table; for the true love of our Neighbor, is always founded in the love of God. And as this last presupposeth the former, so the love of God is accompanied with the love of our Neighbor. 1 *John* 2. 5. [But whoso keepeth the

Word of God, in him is the love of God perfected.] 1 *John* 5. 1, 2. [Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten of him. By this we know, that we love the Children of God, when we love God and keep his Commandments.] Now if this were impoſſible to be done, the Law of God were *eo nomine* unjuſt and tyrannical: For *Pharaoh* is condemned by God and man, for laying ſuch commands upon the *Iſraelites*, as they could not poſſibly perform, *Exod* 5. 6, 7.

For the further refuting of this opinion, we might produce the contrary judgment of all the Greek and Latin Fathers; of which take theſe few for the preſent, *Juſtin Martyr*, *in Quæſt. & Reſponſ. ad Orthodoxos*. But what is the total Juſtice or Univerſal Righteouſneſs according to the Law? To love God above himſelf, and his neighbor as himſelf, which is not impoſſible to men who apply their hearts thereunto; for that ſaying, By the works of the Law, ſhall no fleſh be juſtified; The Apoſtle doth not therefore

fore alleadge it, becauſe we cannot do impoſſible things, but becauſe we will not do that which is poſſible. Do not blame the Lord, for he demands nothing impoſſible, ſaith *Chryſoſt de Pœnit. Hom.* 8 See *Baſil* upon *Pſal.* 118. *Hieronymus in Expoſ. Symbol. ad Damaſum. Auguſt.* in *Pſal.* 56. Nor would God command this, if it were impoſſible to be done of man: *Idem de tempore, Serm.* 61. Neither could God command any thing which is impoſſible, becauſe he is juſt; nor will he condemn any man for that he could not do, becauſe he is pious and good. *Idem de tempore, Serm.* 191. We deteſt their Blaſphemy, who ſay, That God hath commanded any thing that is impoſſible to man. *Concilium Arauſicanum*, according to the Catholick Faith we believe, That all who are baptized, having received Grace, may and ought, by the help and the co-operation of Chriſt, to fulfil all things that belong to Salvation, if they will faithfully endeavor or labor thereunto.

Thirdly, By way of Correction, this ſerves firſt to reprove all unbelief that is found in men

gen to the contrary; see what the Lord saith of the unbelieving *Israelites*, who were rendred unbelieving persons, who were indisposed to enter upon the holy Land of Promise, being deterred by the pretenders of impossibility to overcome the *Canaanites*, and scale and beat down their Cities, *Numbers* 13 and 14 Chapters. Unto whom sware the Lord, that they should not enter into his rest, but to them who believed not? So then they could not enter in, because of unbelief, *Heb.* 3. 18, 19.

Secondly, This serves to reprehend them who look for Life and the blessing of the Promises, and yet stand at a stay, and make not progress towards perfection. *Revel.* 3. 2. *Be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God.*

Thirdly, It rebukes them that go backward rather then forward. *Revel.* 2. 4, 5. *Nevertheless, I have something against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and do thy first works, or I will come unto thee quickly,*

and

and will remove thy Candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

Fourthly, They are here condemned who expect the blessings of Gods Promises and Covenants, and yet are so far from perfecting their Obedience and Sanctification, that they never as yet did set one foot forward in that way; to those the Lord speaketh, *Psal.* 50. 16. *What hast thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth, seeing thou hatest instruction and castest my words behinde thee?* These although they haply call Christ their Lord and Saviour, and plead that they have eaten and drank at his Table, and that he hath taught in their streets, yea that they have propheſied in his Name, will have this answer returned by him, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, I know* or own *you not,* Matth. 7. 22, 23. Luke 13. 26, 27. *For unto those that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, and obey unrighteousness, shall be indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish upon every soul that doth evil, upon the Jew first, and also upon the Gentile,* Rom. 2. 8, 9.

Lastly,

Laſtly, This ſharply ſmites all thoſe of *Michals* ſpirit, who was a mocker at Perfection, as the name ſignifieth, *viz. Who is perfect?* For ſhe not onely deſpiſed *David* in her heart, for wearing the embleme of Righteouſneſs, but for dancing and rejoycing before the Ark; wherefore ſhe is puniſhed with barrenneſs, as all they ſhall be with ſterility of Grace, who remain ſuch ſcoffers of goodneſs, and mockers of perfection, ſee 2 *Sam.* 6. 20, 21, 22, 23.

In the fourth place, this Doctrine may ſerve for Exhortation; First, To thoſe who have made ſome beginnings of progreſs towards Perfection, that they be careful to proceed on in that way, even unto Perfection. *Heb.* 6. 1. *Therefore leaving the principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt, let us go on unto perfection.* *Moſes* witneſſeth that the work of the Lord is perfect, *Deut.* 32. 4. And we are commanded to be perfect, as he is perfect. *Matth.* 5. 48. *The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day, Prov.* 4. 18. Wherefore let all that have obtained like precious Faith

with

with the Apostle and Saints of God; giving all diligence to add to their Faith, Vertue; and to Vertue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, Brotherly kindness; and to Brotherly kindness, Love; for if these things be in you, and abound, they shall make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. See *Revel.* 22. 11. He that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, holy still. *Phil.* 2. 12. *Wherefore my Beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence onely, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* Heb. 6, 11, 12. *And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of Hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the Promises.*

Secondly, To excite those who never yet begun any advance towards holiness, to consider these things. First, Whether the Jewels held forth in the precedent Promises, be not

rich and precious merchandiſe; and ſecondly, at what price they muſt be purchaſed and had, if we will have them; for the Lord will ſpeak here unto us, as he did unto the Jews, *Zach.* 11. 12. *If ye think good, give me my price; if not, forbear.* And as the Lord did ſpeak to ſome, *Matth.* 20. 6. *Why ſtand ye here idle all the day?* So will he ſay to thoſe, Awake to righteouſneſs, and ſin not; for ſome have not the knowledge of God; I ſpeak this to your ſhame.

Conſider, I pray you, what a deal of buſineſs you have to do, ere you can enjoy the Promiſes, and how little time ſome of you may have to do it in. And therefore pray with *David*, *Pſal.* 39. 13. *O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength before I go hence, and be no more.* And with *Moſes*, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wiſdom.* Is it a time to receive money, and to receive Garments, and Oliveyards, and Vineyards, and Sheep, and Oxen, and Men-ſervants, and Maid-ſervants? 2 *King.* 5. 16. [Wherefore he ſaith, Awake thou that ſleepeſt, ſtand up from the dead, and Chriſt

ſhall

ſhall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumſpectly, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time, becauſe the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwiſe, but underſtanding what the will of the Lord is,] *Eph.* 5. 14, 15, 16, 17. [Repent therefore and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out, when the time of refreſhing ſhall come from the preſence of the Lord,] *Acts* 3. 19. [Whatſoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no work, nor deviſe, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou goeſt,] *Eccleſ.* 9. 10. [Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doth righteouſneſs is righteous, as he is righteous; he that committeth ſin, is of the Devil; for the Devil ſinned from the beginning. For this purpoſe was the Son of God manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the work of the Devil,] 1 *John* 3. 7, 8. [This I ſay therefore and teſtifie in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their minde, having their underſtanding darkned, being alienated from the Life of God, through the ignorance that

is in them, through the hardneſs of their hearts; who being paſt feeling, have given over themſelves unto laſciviouſneſs, to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs: But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt, if ſo be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him as the truth is in Chriſt, That ye put off concerning the former converſation, the old man which is corrupt (*or deſtroying*) according to the deceitful luſts, and be ye renewed in the ſpirit of your minde; and that ye put on the new man which is created after the Image of God in righteouſneſs, and holineſs of truth.] *Epheſ.*4. 17,18,19,20,21,22.

In the laſt place, This may ſerve for the comfort and encouragement of thoſe that deſire to obtain the Promiſes, and apply themſelves with all diligence to fulfil the Conditions of the ſame. For firſt it is certain, That the Conditions are feaſible, otherwiſe the Promiſes were made void: Secondly, Chriſt hath promiſed two things unto us of the greateſt conſequence and encouragement: Firſt, That if we finde our ſelves weary with ſtriving againſt ſin, and heavy

laden

laden therewith, that he will eaſe us by helping us to ſhake it off, and remove it. Secondly, That we ſhall finde his yoke eaſie, and his burden light; onely he requireth of us, That we ſhould learn of him, that he is lowly and meek, and then we ſhall finde reſt unto our ſouls. See *Matth.* 11. 28, 29, 30. Whereunto his beloved Diſciple bears witneſs out of his own experience, ſaying, *For this is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous. For whatſoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our Faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt?* 1 *John* 5. 3, 4, 5. There is then no bar or let to the keeping of Gods Commandments, but the wicked world of ſin, which may be overcome by Faith in the Son of God; and then Gods Commandments ſhall not be grievous, but delightful unto us: For what is eaſier or more delightful then to love? and therefore this burden of Chriſts which he lays upon us, is both light and ſweet in general, *Pſal.* 19. 10.

19. 10. alſo 119. 103. There is nothing that unites us more cloſely to God then love. *Rom.* 8. 35, 36, 37, 38. Nothing is ſtronger and more victorious, *Cant.* 8. 6, 7. Nothing is crowned with more vertues, nor more omnipotent in the Lord; ſee 1 *Cor.* 13. throughout.

Thus of the Duty to be done, Perfecting holineſs; now concerning the way wherein it is to be accompliſhed or acquired, ἐν φόβῳ Θεοῦ in the feat of God. Which words may be three ways underſtood.

Firſt, Of that Obedience to Gods Commandments which is commonly called *The fear of God*, *Pſal.* 111. 10. & 112. 1. *Eccleſ.* 12. 13. In which way the Lord hath promiſed to make us an holy people, *Deut.* 26. 17, 18, 19. *Thou haſt avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his Statutes and his Commandments, and his Judgments, and to hearken to his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promiſed thee; and that thou ſhouldſt keep all his Commandments; and to make thee high above all Nations, which*

which he hath made in praiſe, in name, and in honor, that thou maiſt be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath ſpoken.

Secondly, The fear of God may be underſtood of a reverend and awful fear of Gods Righteouſneſs and Judgments. And ſo it is the poſture we ſhould always ſtand in, while we are in our Chriſtian race towards Perfection. *Phil.* 2. 12. *Work out your Salvation with fear and trembling:* Which fear, when perfect love is come, is ſet aſide. 1 *Joh* 4. 17, 18. For *perfect love caſteth out fear.*

Thirdly, It may be taken for a filial or conjugal fear of God and his goodneſs. *Hoſ.* 3. 5. *Afterward ſhall the children of* Iſrael *return and ſeek the Lord their God, and* David *their King, and ſhall fear the Lord, and his goodneſs in the latter days.* And this fear, as it is love in ſome good meaſure and degree, ſo it is the way to that perfect love, which is the fulfiling of the Law: For the beginning, augmenting, and perfecting whereof, I crave leave to ſpeak a word or two to my Reverend Brethren of the Miniſtry, by way of *Aviſo* from this *Proviſo*; And I hope that I may

ſay

say with *Paul*, *That I my self also am perswaded of you my Brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another: Nevertheless, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in minde, because of the Grace that is given to me of God*, Rom. 15. 14, 15. It is not unknown to you how *Phineas*, the son of *Eleazer*, (that is, as the name imports, Confidence of face in or from Gods help) obtained the Covenant of Peace, and of the Everlasting Priesthood, to wit, by slaying *Cozbi*, the lie or lying nature of Sin, and *Zimri*, or that disposition that rejoyceth therein. *Num.* 25. 6, 7. *Psal.* 106. 30, 31. Nor, that if we will be Gods mouth, we must take away the precious from the vile, *Jere.* 15. 19. Nor, that we must stand in the Council of the Lord, ere we can practise and hear his words, *Jere.* 23. 18. and much more, before we can turn men from the evil way, and from the evil of their doings, Verse 22. Yea, that the Law of Truth was in *Levi's* mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips, and that he walked with God in peace and equi-

ty,

ty, when he turned many away from iniquity, *Mal.* 2. 6. Onely mine earneſt Prayer to God for my ſelf and you is, That whereas the Spies and Searchers out of the promiſed Land, were of different mindes, and did in concluſion run two contrary courſes; *Joſhuah* and *Caleb* following the Lord fully, as himſelf teſtifieth, *Numb.* 14. 24. and encouraging the people to obey the Lord, to ſtand firm in the Faith, and ſo to ſet upon their enemies with courage, and hope of victory; but the other ten degenerating from the Faith and Obedience of God, and drawing thouſands after them by their pretence of difficulties, yea, of impoſſibility to ſubdue the *Canaanites*, and to take poſſeſſion of the promiſed Inheritance: That none of us may be found in the number of the laſt named, but all of us in the firſt, though the ſmaleſt number; for our *Saviour* ſaith, That little of this Faith (that God will avenge his elect on their ſpiritual enemies) ſhall be found upon the Earth at his coming, *Luke* 18. 6, 7, 8.

And mine humble ſuit unto you all is, firſt,

That seeing God giveth some to be Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers for the perfecting of the Saints, and the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the Faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that none of us discourage or retard the Saints in their progress, by any pretended impossibility as those formerly did, *Eph.* 4. 10, 11, 12.

Secondly, Whereas Verse 14. the Apostle henceforth would have no men, and much-less us, to be children tossed too and fro with every wind of Doctrine, by the cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: That we take heed that we suffer not the Authors whom we read, to impose upon us in this or any other kinde: To the Law, and to the Testimony; if they speak not according to that, it is because there is no light nor morning in them, *Isai.* 8. 20.

Thirdly, To remember that the Apostle willeth, that we speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the

the Head, even Chriſt, from whom the whole Body fitly joyned together, and compacted by that which every joynt ſupplieth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, maketh increaſe of the Body, to the edifying of it ſelf in love, *Epheſ.* 4. 15, 16. For the end of the Law and Commandments, is love out of a pure heart and a good conſcience, and of faith unfained, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15.

Fourthly, That with St *Paul* we preach Chriſt in the Saints, the Hope of Glory; warning every man, and teaching every man in all wiſdom, that we may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus, *Coloſ.* 1. 27, 28.

Fifthly, That we pray earneſtly under Hope, for the perfecting of the Saints, as the Apoſtles, and holy Miniſters of Chriſt did, *Eph.* 3. 14, 21. *Phil.* 1. 10. *Coloſ.* 4. 12. 1 *Theſ.* 5 23. 1 *Pet.* 5. 10.

Sixthly, That neither the weak Brother may judge the ſtrong, nor the ſtrong may deſpiſe the weak; ſeeing we muſt all appear before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt, *Rom.* 14. 10.

Finally,

Finally, Let us all follow the counſel of St. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. and pray for one another, as the Apoſtle doth, *Heb.* 13. 20, 21. for there are many Adverſaries.

FINIS.